

EVALUATION OF RESEARCH

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In earlier sections of this report suggestions have been made for further investigations and comments have been offered on the limitations of the data base. The actual research activities, including strategy and procedures utilized, however have not been assessed.

The one aspect of this study which can not be faulted in any way, in the opinion of the Principal Investigator, is the various consultant analyses of the data base submitted and included as appendices to this report. The selection of consultants and the determination of the nature of services required were the results of consultations between the contractor and the review personnel. The Department of Transportation should be commended on their understanding of the need for such analyses and their making available the funds necessary to conduct the work.

It can be suggested that several types of analyses that would have proven useful in this study should be considered in future studies. For instance, it was not possible, given the time and funding level available, to conduct a thorough quantitative analysis of the recovered seed data nor was it possible to key down each seed to a more specific level than was accomplished. Also, the few fish scales found at the site were not adequately examined due to the lack of availability of expertise in this field. Perhaps in the future the material can be submitted for identification.

Another type of analysis that may have proven useful is that of plotting the standard deviations of soil residues. On many sites the relative intensity of phosphorus remaining on a site can only be appreciated through computer printouts with this type of data plotted on project mapping coordinates. The inspection of the raw data (see Appendix H) was perhaps not as sensitive as could have been.

Comments on excavation procedure and overall strategy are also useful at this time, after it has been possible to appraise the data base available for analysis. Specifically, the actual method of removal of the disturbed top soil and the exposure of subsoil aboriginal and historic features could have been improved only with the expenditure of a considerable more amount of time and funds. The use of a Gradall was, in retrospect, an excellent choice. The exposed surface did not necessitate a great deal of hand "flat shoveling" by the crew. Very little disturbance occurred to subsoil deposits by the use of this mechanical device. The removal of the entire disturbed overburden at one time, and the covering of the exposed site with black plastic tarps, was a technique that can, in the opinion of the Principal Investigator, be recommended to other excavators working in similar situations.

Subsurface excavation of features followed a "Blueprint" which was developed through consultation with all involved agencies. Admittedly it was a compromise between expediency and a total commitment to the data. Future excavations should modify the procedure to require consistent excavation of entire features rather than several procedures for each feature. It is not felt that

any significant information was lost, however, other features may contain stratigraphic data, activity-related evidence, etc., that was not present in the Delaware Park Site features excavated in 1980.

Recording procedures, while more than adequate for the present, may be improved in several ways. For instance, while Munsell recordation of different strata was taken, additional soil samples taken from within and just adjacent to each feature may be advisable. Three dimension recordation of all in situ artifacts, while not conducted during the 1980 investigations, might prove to be useful in the analysis of provenience patterning.

Finally, the rush to complete the investigations prior to the end of the scheduled field season should not become a regular factor in any future investigations. Even though it becomes impossible to finish a complete site excavation within scheduled time frame, once the significance of the site has been demonstrated an attempt to find additional time and funding should be made.